

REMARKS

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated May 5, 2004. Claims 19 to 25, and 27 to 30 are in the application, of which Claims 19 and 30 are independent. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

Claim 24 was withdrawn from further consideration as allegedly being directed to a non-elected species. This withdrawal is respectfully traversed. In particular, it is noted that the language of Claim 24 closely tracks that of Claim 13, which formed part of the originally-elected group. Accordingly, rejoinder of Claim 24 is respectfully requested.

Claim 26, directed to an ink jet head *per se*, has been cancelled pursuant to the Examiner's withdrawal of this claim based on constructive election by original prosecution.

Newly-added Claim 30 is directed to a stored ink jet head, and has been added pursuant to a telephone conversation with Examiner Michael Brooke on July 20, 2004, during which the Examiner indicated that claims directed to a combination of a stored ink jet head and a storage structure might receive favorable consideration. Claim 30 is believed to be commensurate with the original restriction requirement entered in Paper No. 4, and an action on its merits is therefore respectfully requested.

The informality in Claim 19 has been attended to by amendment above.

An objection was lodged against the drawings for alleged failure to show a lid member, and all claims were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, based on alleged failure of the original specification to disclose such a "lid member". Although it is true that the specification did not use the words "lid member" *in haec verba*, it is believed that the specification disclosed such a lid member. Nevertheless, in an effort to advance prosecution, and to avoid amendment to the drawings, the words "lid member" have been deleted from the claims. Withdrawal of the objections to the drawings and the rejection under § 112 is therefore respectfully requested.

Claims 19 to 23 and 25 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over U.S. Patent 6,097,407 (Terasawa). Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are respectfully requested.

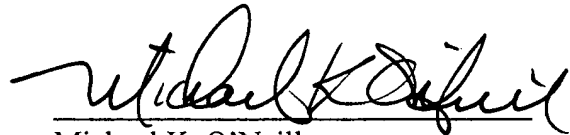
The invention of independent Claim 19 concerns a storing structure for storing an ink jet head. According to one aspect of the invention, air in the ink jet head is capable of moving between an interior of the ink jet head and an exterior thereof through a slit which is provided in an elastic member on an air introduction portion of the ink jet head. This arrangement brings out an advantage that ink leakage from a nozzle is largely prevented, even if air is expanded in the ink jet head due to an environmental change.

Terasawa has been reviewed, but is not seen to disclose at least the features of an air introduction portion provided with an elastic member having a slit, wherein air in the ink jet head is capable of moving between an interior of the ink jet head and an exterior thereof through the slit. As such, Terasawa is unable to partake of the advantageous effects of the present invention.

It is therefore respectfully requested to withdraw the rejections over
Terasawa.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa,
California office at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should continue to be directed to
our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael K. O'Neill", is written over a horizontal line.

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